

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-6, 8-14, 16-23 and 25-26 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4, 10, 16, 19 and 25 were amended; and claims 7, 15 and 24 were canceled. No claims were added. This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 8-12, 17-21, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Prohel et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0002920) in view of Weiner (US Patent No. 6,631,184). In addition, the Examiner has rejected claims 13-14 and 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Prohel et al. in view of Weiner and Thelen et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0156337).

In order to expedite prosecution, independent claims 1, 10 and 19 have been amended to incorporate subject matter previously recited in dependent claims 7, 15, and 24, respectively, and claims 7, 15, and 24 have been canceled. The Examiner has indicated that claims 7, 15, and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 10, and 19 are now in allowable form. Dependent claims 16 and 25 were also amended to properly depend from claims 10 and 19, respectively, and claim 4 was amended to clarify the claim.

Therefore, the rejections of claims 1-6, 8-12, 17-21, and 26 and of claims 13-14 and 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 have been overcome.

II. Objection to Claims

The Examiner has stated that claims 7, 15-16, and 24-25 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As indicated above, the subject matter of claims 7, 15 and 24 have been incorporated into independent claims 1, 10, and 19, respectively, and claims 16 and 25 were amended to depend from claims 10 and 19, respectively.

Therefore, the objection to claims 7, 15-16, and 24-25 has been overcome.

III. Conclusion

It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. It is, accordingly, respectfully requested that the Examiner so find and issue a Notice of Allowance in due course.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,

/Gerald H. Glanzman/

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